

the two extremities, occur principally in the conjunctive tissue which covers the branchial cavity.

#### VASCULAR SYSTEM.

Besides the large vessels so well described by Müller, there is a well-developed capillary system throughout the body. The capillaries are met with in the central nervous system and in the muscles; but it is especially at the anterior and posterior extremities of the body, and in the delicate membrane which surrounds the body (*i. e.* the fins), that they are most developed. These capillaries are very delicate, transparent, and without nuclei in their walls; they are seen with difficulty when the body is covered with epithelium. In the fins they assume a longitudinal direction, and show many sinuosities and anastomoses. From the head to the tail they form around the central nervous system and dorsal cord a series of longer or shorter loops. They are met with in the interstices of the bundles of the lateral muscles. Quatrefages thought he saw a movement of blood in lacunæ; but these lacunæ are capillaries with walls: they are also found in the parts regarded by Müller as the fin-rays, and by Quatrefages as spinous apophyses, and it is in the opaque body which these enclose that they are to be seen with the elastic fibres and bodies of the conjunctive tissue. These capillaries are often filled with small, round, regular, slightly granulated bodies  $\frac{1}{250}$ th millim. or less in diameter, and apparently destitute of a nucleus: these are the blood-corpuscles of the *Branchiostoma*. I do not think that they are visible in the living animal; neither Müller, nor Quatrefages, nor myself was able to see them therein. I found them in specimens preserved in a solution of chromic acid. In any case, the vascular system of the Lancelet is more complete than has hitherto been supposed; and the blood, with its corpuscles, is distributed through it, as in other Vertebrata, in walled vessels, and not in lacunæ.

#### EPITHELIUM.

In the cells of the epithelium I could discover no nuclei. This was the case also with Quatrefages.—*Comptes Rendus*, July 11, 1864.

*Note on the Great Auk.* By Dr. P. L. SCLATER, M.A., Sec. Z.S.

With reference to the list by Mr. Champley, in a recent Number of the 'Annals,' of the existing specimens of the skins and eggs of the Great Auk (*Alca impennis*), my friend Dr. G. Hartlaub, of Bremen, remarks to me, in a letter recently received, that it seems to be very incomplete. Dr. Hartlaub states that there is a very beautiful specimen of this bird in the Bremen Museum, also one at Leyden,—neither of which appear to be alluded to by Mr. Champley.

The Oldenburg collection is also in possession of one of the finest existing eggs of the Bird, which was acquired at the sale of the collection of the late Dr. Graba, of Kiel, for little more than a thaler!